

Nomi Kaplan



Dandelion Picnic

I was feeling ineffectual and timid. Then I took an assertiveness training course, here in Kitsilano. It was really an elementary kind of course—I've done psychotherapy, groups, and all that.

But the day after the first evening of the course, I went into the darkroom and all hell broke loose. I said to myself, 'Who am I doing this for? Who do I have to please? Why can't I do what I want to do?' And I started cutting up pictures, I started playing with F Stops, I started making crazy designs and going completely wild. I did everything and anything that I'd ever wanted to do. . .

I kept working. Then they asked me if I would have a show. I said, 'No, I can't. I don't have a body of work.' About five minutes later, I said, 'Of course I can. Dammit. I can have a show. I can do it.' And I did.

That was the beginning of my self-confidence in my ability to make something I felt would work. It all had to do with that assertiveness course.

(Nomi Kaplan interviewed by Jillian Riddington and Anne Knowlson, reprinted with permission from *Kinesis*, March 1980.)